

TOT: 080130Z FEB 80

SUBJECT

- FURTHER ON OQUELI DEATH

FURTHER BACKGROUND. WE SHOULD ADD THAT DESPITE SPECULATION ON EITHER BRIGTHING OR CLEVERLY HING SPONSORS OF THE MURDERS, WE HAVE NO SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING OQUELI AS OR FLORES' DEATHS NOR OF PROBABLE CULPABILITY. YOU MAY WISH TO PASS ALONG TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S STATEMENT TAKEN FROM THE 16 JAN 80 PRESS GUIDANCE (STATE 014725). WE CONDEMN THE KILLINGS OF GILDA FLORES AND HECTOR OQUELI IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS. SUCH POLITICAL KILLINGS ARE AN OUTRAGEOUS VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY ARE AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE PEACEFUL POLITICAL ACTIVITY IMPOSSIBLE AND ROLL BACK THE GAINS DEMOCRACY HAS MADE IN THE REGION IN RECENT YEARS. YOUR EMBASSY IN GUATEMALA CITY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA. WE HAVE URGED IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF GUATEMALA UNDERTAKE IMMEDIATELY AN URGENT THOROUGH AND PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF THESE MURDERS SO THAT THOSE RESPONSIBLE ARE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE. WE NOTE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A FURTHER REPORT OF AN ATTEMPT TO THE MURDER OF UNOURED POLITICAL ACTIVIST IN GUATEMALA. WE CANNOT OVERSTATE OUR HORROR OF THIS AND OUR CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE OF THE STABLE PACES OF POLITICAL TOLERANCE. YOUR AMBASSADOR HAS RAISED IT WITH THE PRESIDENT OF GUATEMALA WHO ASSURED WITH THAT HE WOULD PURSUE AN AGGRESSIVE INVESTIGATION. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMISSION FOLLOWED THIS AMBASSADORIAL INITIATIVE.

Approved for Release

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